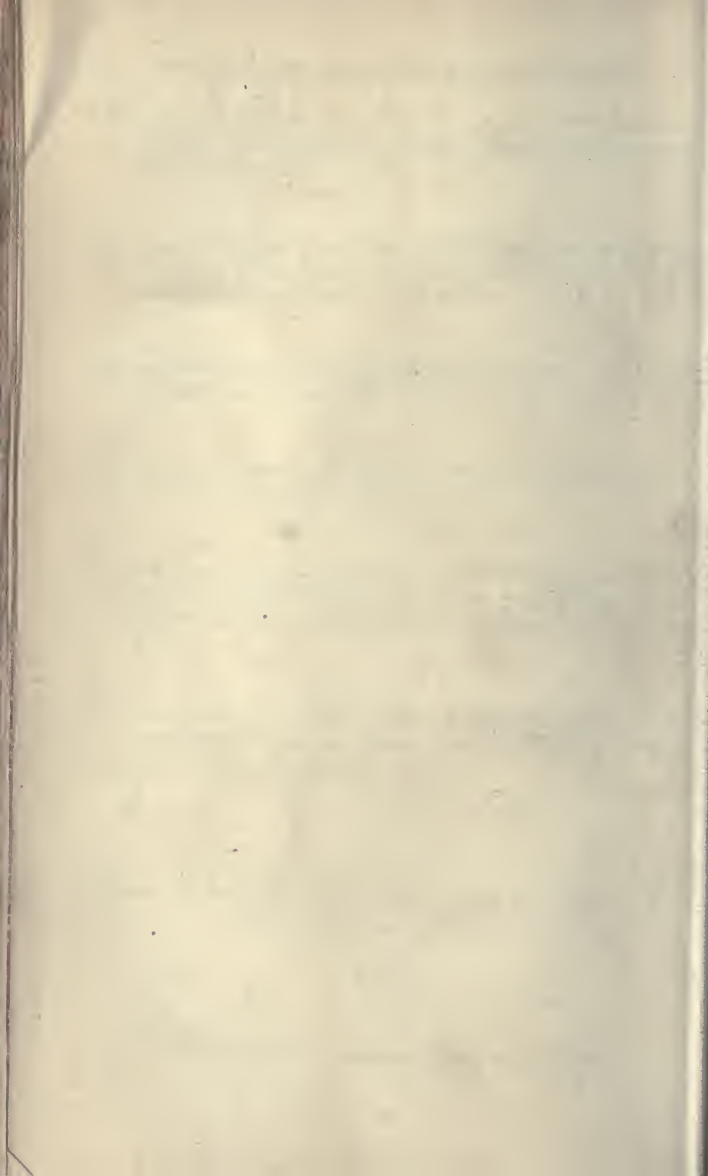


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ST. PATRICK

AND THE

EARLY IRISH CHURCH.

QUESTIONS

FOR

ROMAN CATHOLICS.

BY THE

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QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED BY ROMAN CATHOLICS.

DID Christianity exist in Ireland before the arrival of St. Patrick?—if so—How could St. Patrick be the founder of Christianity in Ireland?

St. Chrysostom—A.D. 400—and Tertullian as early as A.D. 200—testify that there existed in Ireland Christian congregations, *scripturally* instructed—"discour[si]ng matters out of the Scriptures." (St. Chrys. Sermon liii. on the advantage of reading the Scriptures.)

Where was St. Patrick himself converted? The "Confession of St. Patrick" states that *in Ireland* "the Lord brought him to a sense of his unbelief," &c.

Thus so far from St. Patrick first teaching Christianity to Ireland, Ireland first taught Christianity to St. Patrick!

On St. Patrick's return to Ireland as a Missionary had he any Commission from Rome? Did *the Pope* send him to Ireland?

If so, Why do not the historians of those times inform us of such Commission? If St. Patrick really came from Rome, why does not history tell us so?

Now, the standard Roman Catholic Historians, viz. Prosper, Bede, Platina, &c., &c., testify that a man named PALLADIUS came to Ireland, commissioned by Pope Celestine, this was about the year 431.

The mission of Palladius, the Pope's Missionary, was unsuccessful;—the Irish people rejected both himself and his teaching. They had already a Christian Church and Christian Bishops in Ireland. The Irish people were satisfied with their existing Church, and therefore rejected the missionary sent by the Pope. After a short and unsuccessful visit to Ireland, Palladius departed from that country. This is testified by *all* historians of that period.

About the same year (A.D. 431) St. Patrick arrived in Ireland as a Missionary. He was prompted to undertake this Mission, as he states in his "Confession

through a sense of gratitude to the Irish people, from whom he had himself first learned the Gospel of Christ.

This Mission of St. Patrick was eminently successful. Thousands obeyed the call and believed the Gospel. Yet his Mission from Rome is not even once mentioned by the Romish historians of those times. And, Why? Simply because neither Rome nor the Pope of Rome had any part in it!

Prosper, Bede, Platina, and other historians, devoted to the cause of Rome, record the *unsuccessful* Mission of Palladius, because, though abortive, it yet proceeded from Rome.

Would not these historians have taken even more care to record the *successful* Mission of St. Patrick, if he had come from Rome?

But they are *silent*. No record is given of such Commission. This ominous silence of such historians is an *eloquent* argument in proof that St. Patrick's Mission had nothing to do with Rome.

The argument is this, Would these learned historians and many others so devoted to Rome, and so thoroughly inclined to record, if not to magnify, the success of Rome and her Missions,—Would they indeed record the short and unsuccessful effort of Palladius—because he proceeded from the Pope—and yet thus omit to attribute to Rome so *successful* a Mission as that of St. Patrick, if *he* too had really been commissioned from Rome?

But the best way to ascertain St. Patrick's opinions, is to examine what doctrines he held. What then were St. Patrick's Doctrines? Were they those believed by ROMANISTS or those believed by PROTESTANTS? Let us see, viz. :—

I. All Roman Catholics now hold that the Pope is the UNIVERSAL BISHOP over the Church.

Now this title was quite unknown to St. Patrick, and to the times in which St. Patrick lived. It was first given by the Emperor Phocas to Pope Boniface III. in the year 606. (See Platina, *in Vit. Bonif. III.*)

Thus was this title first invented, just 175 years *after* St. Patrick's arrival in Ireland. How then could St. Patrick have believed in it?

At this very period too, the Church of Ireland was

independent of Rome. Bede (Book II. c. iv.) states that Laurentius, a Roman Catholic Bishop in England, A.D. 605, "endeavoured to exercise his pastoral solicitude *over the Scots, who inhabit the island of Ireland*, which is next to Britain." (The Irish were then called Scots.)

In a letter written by Laurentius, the Pope's Bishop, (A.D. 605) he states (see Bede as above) viz.,—

"We held both the Britons and Scots [*i.e.* the Irish] in great esteem for sanctity, &c. We have been informed, however, by Bishop Daganus [an Irish Bishop] &c., that the Scots [the Irish] in no way differ from the Britons in their behaviour; for Bishop Daganus coming to us not only *refused to eat with us*, but *even to take his repast in the same house*, where we were entertained."

Now, whether this were right or wrong, it was yet the conduct of the Bishops *of the ancient Irish Church*—the Church of St. Patrick—the Church of St. Columba—the Church of the Island of Saints! Shewing plainly that the ancient Irish Church was independent of, and even held no communion with, ROME.

Thus neither St. Patrick, nor the ancient Irish Church, acknowledged THE SUPREMACY OF THE POPE!

II. The Roman Catholic Church enjoins the CELIBACY OF THE CLERGY. Did St. Patrick hold this doctrine or acknowledge this discipline?

He did not. For in his "Confession" he states that he was himself "the son of one Calpurnius *a Deacon*, who was the Son of one Potitus *a Priest*"!

In another part of St. Patrick's writings he speaks of his father as a *Decurio*. Now a *Decurio* was not a *military* officer as some have asserted, but a *civic* authority, an office which might be filled by a Clergyman. *Decurio* means *an adviser*, &c. (Du Cange, Glossary.)

This is of itself sufficient to shew that CLERICAL CELIBACY was not practised in St. Patrick's days! The Church of Rome had not as yet assumed the characteristic of the apostacy spoken of by St. Paul, "forbidding to marry," (1 Tim. iv. 1—3.)

III. The Roman Catholic Church WITHHOLDS THE CUP FROM THE LAITY in the administration of the Lord's Supper. Did St. Patrick practise HALF COMMUNION?

He did not—he *could* not—for such a practice was then unknown. The cup was not withdrawn from the Laity until the Council of Constance, in the year 1415. Just 974 years *after* St. Patrick's arrival in Ireland!

IV. The Church of Rome prohibits the use of the HOLY SCRIPTURES. Now, what was St. Patrick's teaching on this point? Was it Romish?

It was not—for St. Patrick emphatically declares in a work "On the Abuses of the age," viz.:—

"Chap. XII. The twelfth kind of abuse is, that the people are without Law,—who, while they despise *thé word of God* and the precepts of His Law, run by diverse modes of error, into the same snare of destruction. * * * They indeed travel along these paths of perdition, whereas *the one royal road*, namely, *the Law of God*, which turns neither to the right hand nor the left—is *by disuse* deserted."

The Bible, then, which St. Patrick thus—and so unlike a Roman Catholic—extolled, was St. Patrick's only RULE OF FAITH. That which caused various kinds of error, was not indeed the Bible—but the *neglect* of the Bible!

V. The Church of Rome practises THE INVOCATION OF SAINTS, and especially of the Blessed Virgin. Was this doctrine held by St. Patrick?

It was not. The "Hail Mary," the common daily Prayer of Romanists, was not known *as a Prayer* at the time of St. Patrick's arrival in Ireland. The "Third Part of the Hail Mary" had not then been "added by the Church," and, at all events, was unknown to St. Patrick and the *Irish Church*.

Roman Catholics, however, quote a passage from St. Patrick's "Confession," in which he states that "once, while troubled by Satan, he called on HELIAS, and immediately he saw *the Sun* rise in the heavens, which dispelled his heaviness," &c.

From this, Roman Catholics would endeavour to prove that St. Patrick invoked ELIJAH. But not so!

For "out of their own mouth will I judge them" in this respect. I shall now quote from a *Roman Catholic* writer, called FATHER COLGAN.

In the Lives of St. Patrick, compiled by Colgan, we obtain the following information regarding this incident, viz.:—

1. The First Biography:—The Hymn of Fiech omits the incident altogether.

2. The Second Life says that "He invoked ELI." (c.xx.)

The word "ELI" means "my GOD;" as expressed by our Blessed Lord upon the cross. (St. Matt. xxvii. 46.)

3. In like manner the Third Life states, "Then Patrick twice invoked the aid of ELI, and ELI came and rescued him." (c. xvii.)

4. The Fourth Life quotes the passage as in the "Confession." (c. xxiv.)

5. The Fifth Life states distinctly that "When he had thrice invoked *Christ, the true Sun*, immediately the sun arose upon him," &c. (lib. i. c. viii.) see Malachi ii. 4.

6 and 7. The Sixth and Seventh Lives, more recent Biographies, state that he invoked the Prophet Elias. But these two Lives are even on Roman Catholic evidence unworthy of credit. Dr. Lanigan, I. 192, calls them, "those two compilations of all *stories*," &c. !

Thus the earlier and more authentic Biographers of St. Patrick interpret this incident as an invocation of the Lord Jesus Christ :—he invoked ELI, that is, "*my God*."

And our more modern Roman Catholics, who would thus falsely accuse St. Patrick of this *one* Romish doctrine, act as did once the unbelieving Jews; for when Christ from the cross invoked His Father, saying, "ELI, ELI," (i.e. "my God, my God") the Jews "that stood there, said, This man *calleth for Elias*." (St. Matt. xxvii. 47.)

Thus did St. Patrick, even on Romish evidence, invoke his GOD, whereupon Roman Catholics accuse him of calling on ELIAS.

To call on Elijah would be, under any circumstances, quite useless. That holy Prophet, when about to ascend to heaven in a chariot of fire, and while bidding farewell to his servant Elisha, thus addressed him: "Ask what I shall do for thee, *before I be taken away from thee*," (2 Kings ii. 9; 4 Kings ii. 9, in Douay Bible,) that is to say, if you ask *after* "I am taken away from thee," it will be useless.

That St. Patrick had no need of Elijah, or any saint, is evident from the following beautiful passage, called

ST. PATRICK'S HYMN.

"At Tara to day! The strength of God pilot me; the power of God preserve me; the wisdom of God instruct me; the eye of God watch over me; the ear of God hear me; the word of God give me sweet talk; the hand of God defend me; the way of God guide me. Christ be with me; Christ before me; Christ after me; Christ in me; Christ under me; Christ over me; Christ on my right hand; Christ on my left hand; Christ on this side; Christ on that side; Christ at my back; Christ in the heart of every person to

whom I speak; Christ in the mouth of every person who speaks to me; Christ in the eye of every person who looks upon me; Christ in the ear of every person who hears me. At Tara to day I invoke the mighty power of the Trinity. Salvation is the Lord's, Salvation is the Lord's—Salvation is CHRIST's. May thy Salvation, O Lord, be always with us."

This was the prayer of St. Patrick, addressed to GOD ALONE. CHRIST and His atonement are the grand subjects of the prayer, "the beginning and the end" thereof. His help was not in the creature, but to him CHRIST was "all and in all." (Col. iii. 11.)

VI. The Church of Rome enjoins the belief in a place called PURGATORY. Did St. Patrick hold this doctrine?

He did not. St. Patrick has left on record a most valuable document, whereby it is most clearly established that any such doctrine was wholly unknown to him.

This document is entitled "*De tribus habitaculis*,"—"Concerning the three habitations." He therein writes, viz.:—

"There are three habitations under the eye of Almighty God; the highest, the lowest, and the middle. Of these, the highest is called the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven; the lowest is called Hell; THE MIDDLE PLACE is called THIS PRESENT WORLD. * * In the Kingdom of God there are no bad people, but all are good; but in Hell there are no good people, but all are bad; and each of these places [Heaven and Hell] is supplied from the middle place [the present world]."

He then speaks of the *two* roads, viz.:—

"The *broad road* of life is to be avoided, which leads to death; but by every desire of the heart, the *narrow road*, which leads to life, must be sought and entered on."

Thus St. Patrick knew of no *third road*, nor of any *third place* beyond the grave. St. Patrick therefore did not believe in the Romish doctrine of PURGATORY.

VII. The Church of Rome professes belief in THE CREED OF POPE PIUS IV. Did St. Patrick know anything of this Creed?

Certainly not. He professes very largely the Articles of his Faith in his "Confession." They are almost word for word as the Apostles' Creed, which is believed by all Protestants. But in this Creed of St. Patrick, he never professes to believe in Transubstantiation or Purgatory, or Seven Sacraments, or the Invocation of Saints, or such like. Nor were these Doctrines included in any creed, until they were *added* to the Nicene Creed, in

the twelve novel Articles of Pope Pius IV., on the 9th day of December, A.D. 1564; that is just 1133 years *after* the arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland!

Such was the Ancient Church of Ireland! the Church of St. Patrick! the Church of the Island of Saints! and such did it continue in Doctrine and Discipline—INDEPENDENT OF THE CHURCH OF ROME—until King Henry II. urged on by *Pope Adrian IV.* invaded Ireland, A.D. 1172, and reduced its ancient Christian Church into subjection to the Church of Rome.

Thus 741 years *after* the arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland did the ancient and independent Christian Church of Ireland,—which produced its Saints and its Martyrs, which honored God's Holy Word, and taught the pure Gospel of Christ—become with her people and her clergy subservient to the power of Rome.

Well may we conclude with the plaintive language of a recent Roman Catholic historian, O'DRISCOLL, in his "*Views of Ireland*," vol. ii. p. 84.

"There is something very singular in the Ecclesiastical History of Ireland. The Christian Church of that country, as founded by St. Patrick and *his predecessors* existed for many ages, *free and unshackled*. For about *Seven Hundred Years* this Church maintained its *independence*. It had no connexion with England, and differed upon points of *importance* from ROME.

"The first work of Henry II. was to reduce the *Church of Ireland* into obedience to the *Roman Pontiff*. Accordingly he procured a Council of the Irish Clergy to be held at Cashel in 1172, and the combined influence and *intrigues* of Henry and the Pope prevailed. *This Council put an end to the Ancient Church of Ireland, and submitted to the yoke of Rome*. This *ominous apostacy* has been followed by a series of calamities hardly to be equalled in the world. *From the days of Patrick to the Council of Cashel, was a bright and glorious career for Ireland*. From the sitting of this Council to our times, the lot of Ireland has been *unmixed evil, and all her History a tale of woe*!"

Such has the "Island of Saints" become under the dominion of Rome!

Well may we say to the People of Ireland, "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for *the old paths*, where is *the good way*, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Jeremiah vi. 16.

I am prepared to defend the statements of this Pamphlet, in open discussion, with any Roman Catholic Priest in London or elsewhere.

(Signed) ROBERT MAGUIRE, A.B.,



